

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-9, 11-40, and 42-46 will be pending. Claims 1 and 42 are independent. Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 10, which has now been cancelled. Claim 46 has been added. No new matter has been introduced. Withdrawal of all rejections is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-41 and 44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith et al. (US 4436689) and Smith et al. (US 4344908) in view of Kobayashi et al. (JP 8-239386) and Carrock et al. (US 4184026). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Generally, with respect to independent claims 1 and 42, the Examiner seems to contend that it would be obvious to use the nucleating agents of Kobayashi et al. in the process of Smith et al., and that this allegedly would lead to the present claims. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants respectfully reiterate that even if, *in arguendo*, the references could be combined in the manner suggested by the Examiner, there is still lack of any reasonable expectation from the cited references that the use of nucleating agents may help the gel-process itself. The present Examples demonstrate the positive effect that the nucleating agents may have. Compare, e.g., Table 2 (page 11) and Table 3 (page 12) of the specification. Table 2 lists examples that use only a polymer (polypropylene) and a solvent (decalin). In Table 2, gelation times are at least 30 minutes and the resulting films, except for the 5 wt% example, are of relatively low quality ("cracked, brittle"). Table 3 lists examples employing the same polymer and solvent, but this time also a nucleating agent. As evident from the results in Table 3, the gelation time and/or film quality is, generally, markedly improved relative to the examples of Table 2.

Moreover, the Examples demonstrate even very small quantities of nucleating agents may already provide improved results. In this regard, note, e.g., the low quantities recited in claims 22-23, 42, and the even lower quantities in claims 24, 44, and 46.

For at least the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 42 are not obvious over Smith '908 and Smith '689 in view of Kobayashi et al. and Carrock et al., and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that all dependent claims are patentable by virtue of their dependency on claims 1 or 42 and for the additional features cited therein.

Therefore, all objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 27, 2009